

Serial No.: 10/068,710

Examiner: Alpus Hsu

In the claims:

Please cancel claims 1-8 and 17.

Claims 1-8 canceled.

Claim 9 (currently amended): An access controller in a data communication node comprising:

an input receiving an inbound packet;

a classification engine coupled to the input classifying the inbound packet, wherein classification information is generated;

a buffer storing admitted inbound packets; and

a disposition engine coupled to the classification engine and the buffer, wherein the disposition engine is adapted to receive the classification information, and to determine whether the inbound packet is to be admitted based on a utilization level of the buffer and the determined ~~from the~~ classification information, and deliver the inbound packet to a switching controller if the packet is admitted.

Claim 10 (original): The access controller of claim 9, wherein the classification information includes a priority associated with the inbound packet.

Claim 11 (original): The access controller of claim 10, wherein the disposition engine gives precedence in admitting packets associated with a first priority over packets associated with a second priority.

Claim 12 (original): The access controller of claim 9, wherein the disposition engine admits the inbound packet if the utilization level of the buffer is lower than a predetermined threshold level.

Claim 13 (original): The access controller of claim 9, wherein the disposition engine discards the inbound packet if the utilization level of the buffer is higher than a predetermined threshold level.

Claim 14 (original): The access controller of claim 9, wherein the disposition engine discards the inbound packet based on a discard probability that varies based on the classification information.

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Claim 15 (currently amended): A method for packet traffic management in a data communication node including an access controller and a switching controller, the method comprising:

at the access controller:

receiving an inbound packet;

classifying the inbound packet, wherein classification information is generated, the classification information including a priority associated with the inbound packet;

determining congestion status data ~~from the classification information;~~

admitting the inbound packet based on the congestion status data and the classification information; and

delivering the admitted inbound packet to the switching controller; and

at the switching controller, determining whether the admitted packet is to be forwarded to a destination address.

Claim 16 (original): The method of claim 15, wherein the access controller is a media access controller.

Claim 17 (canceled)

Claim 18 (currently amended): The method of claim 16⁷, wherein the admitting the inbound packet further comprises giving precedence to packets associated with a first priority over packets associated with a second priority.

Claim 19 (currently amended): The method of claim 16⁷ further comprising storing the inbound packet in a packet buffer associated with the access controller if the packet is admitted.

Claim 20 (original): The method of claim 19, wherein the determining of the congestion status data comprises determining a utilization level of the packet buffer.

Claim 21 (original): The method of claim 20, wherein the admitting of the inbound packet comprises admitting the inbound packet if the utilization level of the packet buffer is lower than a predetermined threshold level.

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Claim 22 (original): The method of claim 20 further comprising discarding the inbound packet if the utilization level of the packet buffer is higher than a predetermined threshold level.

Claim 23 (original): The method of claim 20 further comprising discarding the inbound packet based on a discard probability that varies based on the classification information.

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